

**METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR INSPECTING DEFECTS IN A
SEMICONDUCTOR WAFER**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In a wafer inspection and sampling system, wafer defects are detected and stored in a data store as defect data. Information is also provided, representative of clusters of defects on the wafer. A statistically based sampling of the defects is made to obtain a set of sampled defects. Subsequent detailed inspection and analysis of the sampled defects produces additional data which facilitate an understanding of process errors.

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